MEASUREMENT OF PERCEPTION AND SATISFACTION LEVELS OF DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL TOURIST AVAILING FOOD SERVICES IN RESTAURANTS UNITS IN RISHIKESH UTTARAKHAND

Dr.Vivek Singh Aswal

Lecturer, IHM kufri, Shimla, Himachal Pradesh-171012,

Mr. Manoj Rana

Lecturer, IHM kufri, Shimla, Himachal Pradesh-171012,

Mr.Surinder Singh

Assistant Professor, IVS (BHM) HPU, Shimla, Himachal Pradesh-171012,

Mr.Abhishek Rajan

Senior Lecturer, IHM kufri, Shimla, Himachal Pradesh-171012

Ms.Sapna Tehraik

Senior Lecturer, IHM kufri, Shimla, Himachal Pradesh-171012,

Mr. Ritik Kashyap

MHM 4th Semester, IHM kufri, Shimla, Himachal Pradesh

ABSTRACT

With the rapid development in transportation and the emergence of information technology after 1995, the tourism industry has flourished too many folds where a large number of the human population started to move to faraway located destinations for fun and recreation and contribute a good amount of revenue for their recreational needs and other requirements related accommodation, food and shopping. With a highly competitive restaurant industry in tourism destinations, medium-scale restaurant owners ought to be more focused on running their business outlets. While restaurants are more expected as the business activities of selling only food services in the tourist destinations to satisfy the physiological requirements of travellers whereas they play an important role as the main suppliers of one of the authentic cultural experiences that travellers can experience when they are on vacations (Chuang, 2009). While considering culinary attributes and restaurant service personnel's role in providing genuine tourist experiences, supporting role in tourism destination attractiveness, and escalating the overall tourism offerings, the role of gastronomy and restaurant services in overall tourist satisfaction at tourist places should be examined. Therefore, this research paper would measure the perception and satisfaction of visitors toward food and beverage services in the Rishikesh region of Uttarakhand. The sample of 350 visitors which includes both domestic and International was collected and analyzed statistically with the help of descriptive and inferential statistics. Moreover, the tourist Satisfaction measurement scale has 17 items based

on various food items and services provided in the restaurants, and tourist perception and satisfaction were recorded on these items on 5 points Likert Scale.

Keywords: Perception, Satisfaction, Food and Beverage Outlets, Service quality, Food and Culinary Tourism.

1. INTRODUCTION

Uttarakhand is one of the state among twenty-eight states and nine union territories of India that attract tourists of all kind to its major attractive places. Uttarakhand state has many attractions that include holy pilgrimages places like Badrinath, Kedarnath, Gangotri and Yamnotri also known as 'Char Dham', two world heritage sites, seven wildlife sanctuaries, six national parks, rivers, glaciers, valleys , thick forest cover, adventure sports, yoga and meditation centres like Rishikesh.

With the passage of time tourist's expectation about the cuisines have also become one of the determinants of their visits in tourist destinations. Tourists are now expressing their desire for local cuisines and beverages. Although there is unprecedented number of food outlets established in recent past across the Yatra routes, connecting Yamnotri, Gangotri, Kedarnath, Badrinath as well as other terminal destinations like Haridwar and Rishikesh, but quality of food as well as hygiene and sanitation have become the prime concern. Employees working in these units except a handful number of restaurants are untrained and in some of the eateries their dresses are savvy and give negative message to the audience having high expectation in view of increased cost. In view of this, study of food service experience is important to investigate that may be a critical factor to cause both satisfaction and dissatisfaction to domestic and international tourist availing food services in restaurants units in Rishikesh, Uttarakhand. I firmly believe this study will help visitors, local residents, hoteliers, restaurant chains, State and Central Government, students, scholars, academicians, and other hospitality and tourism personnel to promote local cuisines, and culinary tourism to provide better tourist satisfaction.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Tourist satisfaction is essential for tourism businesses to maintain advantage in business competition and initiate positive and effective word of mouth publicity (Rimmington&Yüksel, 1998).It is important to measure tourist satisfaction as it helps in understanding tourist needs and demands more accurately as well as recognize destination strength, weakness and analyse significant factors important to the overall success of any destination (Bagri & Kala, 2015; Dmitrovic et al., 2009; Meng, Tepanon, &Uysal, 2008).

Long (2004) known for proposing first definition of culinary tourism where food was represented as a potential factor to attract tourists in a tourism destination. Du Rand and Heath's (2006) found in their study that about 37% of travelers who visit South Africa contemplate food as a support attraction. Sheldon and Fox (1988) found in their study that about 18% of tourist visiting Hawaii considered significant role of foodservice in their selection of tourist destination. Therefore, Molz's (2007) expression of culinary tourism phenomenon is more pertinent here. She claim that "culinary tourism refers to practices of exploratory eating, especially those instances in which eating unfamiliar food or participating in alien food ways is seen as a way of encountering, knowing, and consuming other places and cultures."

As suggested by many researchers Arora & Singer, (2006); Ma et al., (2011) that the constituents which contribute to any dining satisfaction are related with food (includes menu

variety, taste, presentation, hygiene), quality of service (include promptness, consistency, friendliness), atmospherics (include cleanliness, aroma, decoration, ambience, sounds), and other attributes that include perceived authenticity and perceived value for money. Nam and Lee (2011); Lockyer (2005), stick to the elements of dinning as tangibles (such as ambience, decoration, and the overall premises quality) and intangibles that represent service criteria. The dimensions mention above constitute an amalgam of those dimension that acquired from literature. These are certain dimensions that have been used for the purpose of this study to measure the level of perception and satisfaction among Domestic and International tourist availing food services in restaurants units in Rishikesh Uttarakhand.

3. THE RESEARCH GAP

The Culinary tourism has been included as an academic subject (Sudershan& Bhatt, 1995; Sudershan, Rao, Polasa, Rao, &Rao, 2008), but what is the role and scope of cuisine in perspective of international tourist clientele is almost missing. India is highly under-researched in culinary tourism, though India is known for a variety of foods and drinks (Hannam and Diekmann, 2011). Culinary challenges faced by tourist and pilgrims can create negative perception among the visitors willing to visit the tourist places of Rishikesh. Cohen and Avieli (2004) have attempted to address issues related to negative perception of travellers. As on date most of the studies on tourism discipline have been conducted on product image and such studies are confined with tourist destinations rather than concentrating on destination elements that make a tourist destination the most preferred tourist attraction.

A customer perception about the availability of ethnic food at visiting destination has not been touched upon by researchers (Josiam and Monteiro (2004). Quite a significant number of publications especially travel Guide are available on Rishikesh but such books are salient on food quality upon which a tourists normally spends almost 50% of travel budget. Mitchell and Hall (2003) stated that the studies on consumer behaviour in the area of food tourism are rare and as a result, considerable research is to be undertaken to understand the significance of food tourism and how it could be the major determinants of tourist motivation. Therefore, this emerging body of research work underpins the need to examine the multiple and often mundane forms of food consumption within tourist experiences of most important tourist destination like Rishikesh.

A Venn diagram representing the contextual gap study addressed by review of literature study is presented in **Figure 1.1.** The union of the three circles represents the contextual gap.
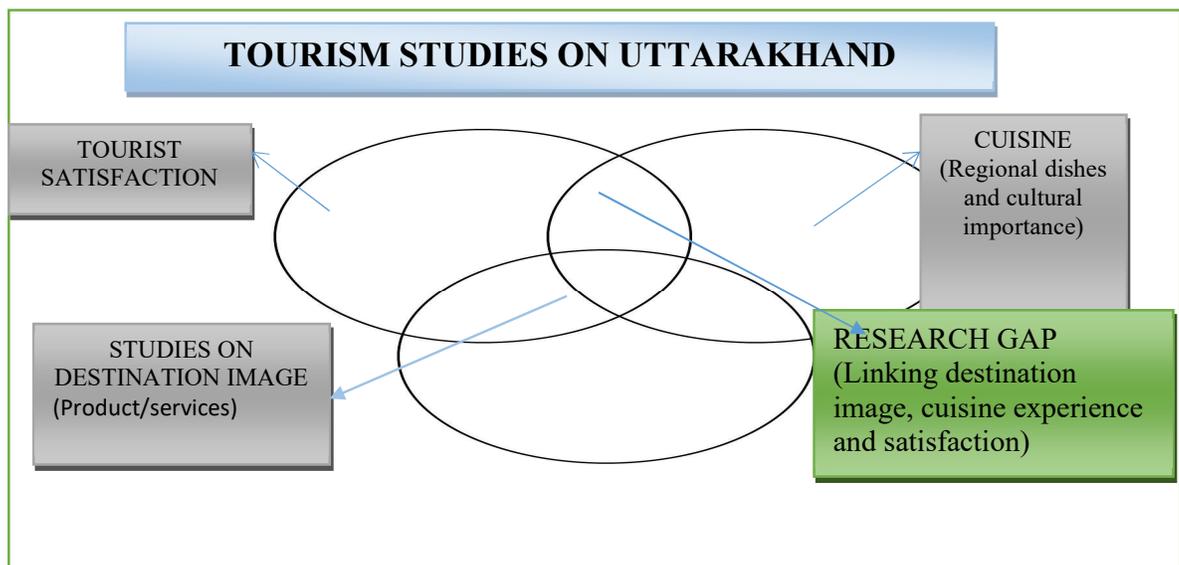
4. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

Objective 1:"To find out the level of satisfaction of domestic and international tourists towards food and beverage services".

Objective 2: "To find out the level of perception of domestic and international tourists towards food and beverage services".

5. RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

Hypothesis H$_a$1:"There is significant difference between satisfaction of domestic and international tourists availing food services in restaurants".

Hypothesis H$_a$2:"There is significant difference between perception of domestic and international tourists availing food services in restaurants".

6. THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A cross-sectional study is used for the purpose of this study to measure the satisfaction level of tourist with restaurants services of study area. A survey questionnaire was developed for the aim of data collection purpose. A survey was conducted with the potential participants so that to collect relevant data pertaining to the research questions. The constructed questionnaire consisted of both open ended as well as combination of close ended questions such as five point Likert scale questions, single and multiple choice based questions and categorical questions. While collecting data, researcher selected one tourist out of every three tourists visited selected restaurants and hotels. Each tourist was explained about the purpose of study before proceeding for survey. Each participant was interviewed for 20–25 min where they were asked some open ended questions about restaurant services experience while visiting to selected restaurants and hotels in the study area apart from filling up of given questionnaire. A total of 200 questionnaires were given to both domestic as well as foreigner tourists.

6.1 SAMPLING FRAME

Sample frame for tourists were hotels and restaurants offered food and beverages in Rishikesh. The data collected from total 50 hotels and restaurants that further divided into three categories which are shown in the table below.

Sr.No.	Categories	Description	Total
1	Category A	Hotels with Minimum Tariff for One Night is Above 3000 /- (In Indian Rupees)	10
2	Category B	Hotels with Minimum Tariff for One Night is Between 1000 to 3000 /- (In Indian Rupees)	20
3	Category C	Only Restaurants that served Food and Beverages to Tourists	20
		Total	50

Table: 1.1 Sample Frame for Study

6.2 SAMPLING POPULATION

In this study the sampling population was tourists who visited Rishikesh and tasted food that offered by available restaurants and hotels in the same area from 10 August, 2022 to 17 March 2023.During the process of data collection; local tourists were not involved in the

sample. The whole survey was conducted though face to face communication method by visiting hotels and restaurants to approach tourists. In the destination area, hotels and restaurants were selected on the basis of tariff structure as mention in below table as well as ratings on popular American travel and restaurant website trip Advisor. On the basis of these criteria, 50 hotels and restaurants were selected for survey that located in Rishikesh.

Sr. No.	Participants	Category A (10)	Category B (20)	Category C (20)	TOTAL (50)
1	Domestic Tourist	40(4x10)	80(4x20)	80(4x20)	200
2	Foreign Tourist	40(4x10)	80(4x20)	80(4x20)	200

Table: 1.2 Showing Sampling Population

Note: Category A, B and C are restaurants and hotels that are selected in study area and described in sample frame.4 'Domestic tourist' and 4 'Foreign tourist' were selected from each category of restaurants and hotels for the sample population.

6.3 SAMPLING TECHNIQUE

According to Ryan, 1995, a well-constructed sample design should represent the population closely. Probability sampling is believed to be the most considered sampling design and random sampling represents true form of probability sampling because every individual has equal chance of selection within the population (Creswell, 2009; Ryan, 1995; Statpac, 2012). For the study purpose, population was divided into two groups or strata (domestic and foreigner) and random sampling was applied in each group to get more accuracy and precision in the results of the study. This sampling technique also permits researcher to focus more on respondents with different features and characteristics.

6.4 DATA COLLECTION

For the purpose of data collection, researcher waited for the tourists outside the selected restaurants and hotels for the collection of data. While collecting data, researcher selected one tourist out of every three tourists visited selected restaurants and hotels. Each tourist was explained about the purpose of study before proceeding for survey. Although questionnaire was developed in English language and also it was used as primary language while communication with tourist but at the same time researcher took utmost care while translating questionnaire in Hindi language to some domestic tourists. Each participant was interviewed for 20–25 min where they were asked some open ended questions about restaurant services experience while visiting to selected restaurants and hotels in the study area apart from filling up of given questionnaire. These questions are restricted to researchers notes and they are certain kinds of questions such as "How do you explain your restaurant food and services experience while visiting Rishikesh" and "What are likes and dislikes associated with restaurant services in Rishikesh".Each participant was encouraged to express their views and suggestions freely so that to collect more genuine information for the study purpose.

Finally, Collection of data was finished on March 18, 2023 with total data collection of 386 participants out of 400 and rest 14 participants was not involved in the study due to insincerely answered and incomplete information furnished by them. A total of 200

Dr.Vivek Singh Aswal
Business, Management and Economics Engineering, 2024 Volume 22 Issue 1, ISSN: 2669-2481 / eISSN: 2669-249X

361

questionnaires were given to both domestic as well as foreigner tourists. Out of these 200 questionnaires in each group, 192 questionnaires were received from domestic and 194 questionnaires from foreigner tourists respectively.

For this study purpose, both the methods of qualitative and quantitative study were adopted to analyse the data with greater insights. Qualitative analysis includes analysis of open ended answers given by respondents through questionnaire whereas quantitative analysis include descriptive analysis of participants demographic profile to understand their satisfaction level with restaurants services offered in Rishikesh. Apart from this, Descriptive statistics (Frequencies, Percentages, Means, and Standard Deviations) and inferential statistics (Independent t-test) were performed to assess and analysis visitors' satisfaction with reference to food service experience in the study area.

7. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

In this study, researcher adopted a proper research design and prepared research questionnaire to collect the data in order to measure tourists (Domestic and Foreigners) perception and satisfaction towards different food and beverage services offered by the restaurants in Rishikesh of Garhwal Himalaya. Moreover, Tourist Satisfaction measurement scale having 17 items which are based on various food items and services provided in the restaurants and tourist perception and satisfaction were recorded on these items on 5 point Likert Scale. Therefore, two objectives and two alternative hypotheses (H_a1 and H_a2) were formulated to conduct the research systematically, logically and statistically which are as mention below.

Objective 1:"To find out the level of satisfaction of domestic and international tourists towards food and beverage services".

Hypothesis H_a1: "There is significant difference between satisfaction of domestic and international tourists availing food services in restaurants".

Objective 2:"To find out the level of perception of domestic and international tourists towards food and beverage services"

Hypothesis H_a2:"There is significant difference between perception of domestic and international tourists availing food services in restaurants"

For testing the hypothesis H_a1; "There is significant difference between satisfaction of domestic and international tourists availing food services in restaurants" and achieving its corresponding objective " To find out the level of satisfaction of domestic and international tourists towards food and beverage services" researcher conducted independent t-tests and calculated mean, S.D., t – ratio, p values to know the significant difference between satisfaction of domestic and international tourists towards food and services offered in restaurants located in study area and results are computed in **table 1.3**

Variable	Group	N	Mean	S.D	Mean Difference	t- ratio	p-value
	Domestic	200	70.09	3.804			

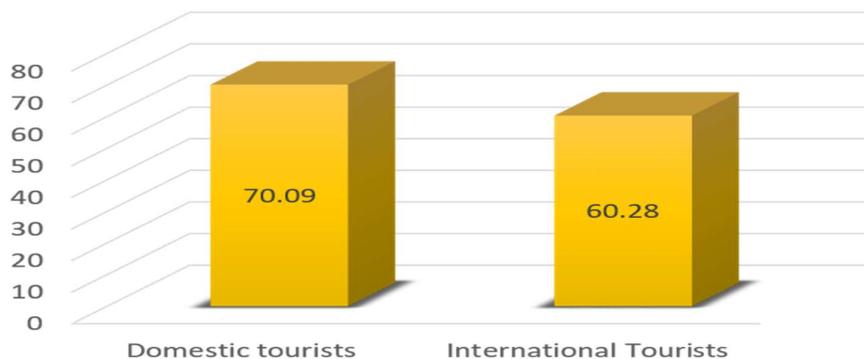| Satisfaction							
	International	150	60.28	4.472	9.805	22.122	0.000**

Table 1.3 Independent t-test for satisfaction of domestic and international tourists towards food and services

**0.01 level of significance

 *0.05 level of significance

From **table 1.3** it was observed that the means and S.D. of domestic and international tourists were 70.09(3.804), 60.28 (4.472) respectively. It indicates that there is significant mean difference between them in reference to their satisfaction about food and beverage services. Researcher also calculated t-value as well as p- value to see the significant difference statistically between the both groups. The values were 22.122 and 0.000 respectively for t – ratio and p- value. The t- value as well as p-values were found significant (p=0.000<0.01) at 0.01 level of significance so, it is clear that domestic and international tourists had difference level of satisfaction towards food and beverage services, they experienced in the study area.

Hence **hypothesis H_a1**"There is significant difference between satisfaction of domestic and international tourists availing food services in restaurants" is **accepted** and its corresponding objective "To find out the level of satisfaction of domestic and international tourists towards food and beverage services" is **achieved.**

Figure 1.2 Mean difference between satisfaction of Domestic and International Tourists

From the above **figure 1.2** it is clear that Domestic tourists were more satisfied as compare to International tourists.

For testing the **hypothesisH_a2;**"There is significant difference between perception of domestic and international tourists availing food services in restaurants" and achieving its corresponding objective " To find out the level of perception of domestic and international tourists towards food and beverage services" researcher conducted independent t-tests and calculated mean, S.D., t – ratio, p values to know the significant difference between perception of domestic and international tourists towards food and services offered in the restaurants, located in study area and results are computed in **table 1.4**.

| Variable	Group	N	Mean	S.D	Mean Difference	t- ratio	p-value
Perception	Domestic	200	79.96	3.592	9.680	22.445	0.000**
	International	150	70.28	4.472			

Table 1.4 Independent t-tests for perception of domestic and international tourists towards Food and services

**0.01 level of significance

*0.05 level of significance

From **table 1.4** it was observed that the means and S.D. of domestic and international tourists were 79.96(3.592), 70.28 (4.472) respectively. It indicates that there is significant mean difference between them in reference to their perception about food and beverage services. Researcher also calculated t-value as well as p- value to see the significant difference statistically between the both groups. The values were 22.445 and 0.000 respectively for t – ratio and p- value. The t- value as well as p-values were found significant (p=0.000<0.01) at 0.01 level of significance so, it is clear that domestic and international tourists had difference level of perception towards food and beverage services, they experienced in the study area.

Hence **hypothesis H_a2**"There is significant difference between perception of domestic and international tourists availing food services in restaurants" is **accepted** and its corresponding objective "To find out the level of perception of domestic and international tourists towards food and beverage services" is **achieved.**
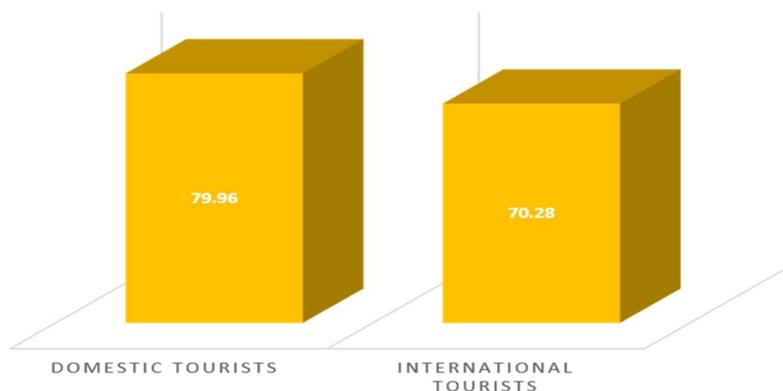
Figure 1.3 Mean differences between perception of Domestic and International Tourists

From the above **figure 1.3** it is clear that Domestic tourists had high perception as compare to International tourists.

8. RESEARCH FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

a) It was found that mean score of Domestic tourists was more than the mean score of International tourists in reference to their satisfaction towards all 17 items related

to food and beverages and mean difference was significant therefore, it is concluded that Domestic tourists were more satisfied than International tourists with food and beverages services.

b) It was observed that mean score of Domestic tourists was more than the mean score of International tourists in reference to their perception towards all 17 items related to food and beverages and mean difference was significant therefore, it is concluded that Domestic tourists had high perception than International tourists with food and beverages services.

c) Findings suggested that Domestic tourists were more satisfied than International tourists with food and beverages services because Domestic are compromising in nature and they are not very particular and specific about their needs, wants and desires, therefore they can easily adjust and satisfied themselves.

d) Results revealed that Domestic tourists had high perception than International tourists with food and beverages services because Domestic tourists are more familiar and know to study area; therefore they have high perception about the food and beverages.

e) Domestic tourists were more satisfied than International tourists with food and beverages services therefore it is necessary that all the restaurants should ensure the complete satisfaction of not only domestic tourists but also for International tourists.

f) Domestic tourists had high perception than International tourists with food and beverages services, therefore it is recommended that restaurants should maintain and provide better food and services to both Domestic and International tourists so they must have better perception about these food and services.

9. RESEARCH LIMITATIONS AND FURTHER RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES

a) This research is limited to measure the perception and satisfaction of tourists, hard and soft skills of manpower working in the restaurants in the Rishikesh region of Garhwal Himalaya in Uttarakhand, Further researches therefore, can be conducted on other districts or regions of Uttarakhand and any other Indian states.

b) Present research is limited to restaurants only whereas further researches can be conducted on hotels other functions and other food and beverages service outlets.

c) This research work is limited to perception and satisfaction of tourists towards food and beverages services only; further researches therefore, can be conducted to measure the perception and satisfaction of tourists towards tourism products and resources in the Garhwal or Kumaun region of Uttarakhand.

d) This research is conducted on 200 domestic and 200 international tourists; further researches therefore, can be conducted on more or less number of tourists visiting the study area.

e) This work is done on all kind of tourists visiting the region like religious, adventures, tourists coming for yoga and meditation further researches therefore, can be conducted only on religious or other forms of the tourism.

f) This study is conducted on Domestic and International tourists both, further researches therefore can be conducted separately either on Domestic or International tourists.

g) This research is limited to hard and soft skills of manpower working in the restaurants whereas further, studies may also include other variables like growth, job security and future perspective of employees working in the restaurants.

h) In present study, researcher divided the data on the basis of nationality Domestic and International whereas further studies may also conduct on the basis of gender, interest, duration of stay and frequency of visit of tourists.

i) This study is limited to 17 items related to food and beverages whereas further studies can be conducted on more or less items.

j) Present study is limited to measure the perception and satisfaction of tourists towards food and beverages services whereas further researches can be conducted on overall perception and satisfaction of tourists towards their entire tour.

REFERENCES

❖ Chuang, H-T. (2009). The rise of culinary tourism and its transformation of food cultures: the national cuisine of Taiwan. The Copenhagen Journal of Asian Studies,27(2), 84-108

❖ Rimmington, M., &Yüksel, A. (1998). Tourist satisfaction and food service experience: results and implications of an empirical investigation. Anatolia, 9(1), 37-57.

❖ Bagri, S. C., & Kala, D. (2015). Tourists' satisfaction at Trijuginarayan, India: An importance performance analysis. Advances in Hospitality and Tourism Research, 3(2), 89–115.

❖ Dmitrovic, T., Cvelbar, K. L., Kolar, T., Brencic, M. M., Ograjensek, I., &Zabkar, V. (2009).

❖ Meng, F., Tepanon, Y., &Uysal, M. (2008). Measuring tourist satisfaction by attribute and motivation: The case of a nature-based resort. Journal of Vacation Marketing, 14(1), 41–56.

❖ Long, L.M. (2004). Culinary tourism. Lexington: University Press of Kentucky.

❖ Du Rand, G. E. and E. Heath (2006) 'Towards a Framework for Food Tourism as an Element of Destination Marketing', Current Issues in Tourism 9(3): 206- 34 .

❖ Sheldon, P. J., & Fox, M. (1988). The role of foodservice in vacation choice and experience: A cross- cultural analysis. Journal of Travel Research, 27(2), 9-15.

❖ Molz, J.G. (2007). Eating difference. The cosmopolitan mobilities of culinary tourism. Space and Culture, 10(1), 77-93.

❖ Arora, R., & Singer, J. (2006). Customer satisfaction and value as drivers of business success for fine dining restaurants. Services Marketing Quarterly, 28(1), 89-102.

- Nam, J-H., & Lee, T.J. (2011). Foreign travellers' satisfaction with traditional Korean restaurants. International Journal of Hospitality Management, 30, 982-989.

- Lockyer, T. (2005). The dining experience: critical areas of guest satisfaction. Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management, 12(1), 50-63.

- Sudershan, R.V., &Bhat, R.V. (1995). Profile of food adulteration in India: analysts' perception. Journal of Food Science and Technology, 32, 368-372.